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Publication number:

0 424 648 A2

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(21) Application number: 90117047.2

(51) Int. Cl.⁵: H04N 7/16

(22) Date of filing: 05.09.90

(30) Priority: 23.10.89 US 425117

New York New York 10153(US)

(43) Date of publication of application:
02.05.91 Bulletin 91/18

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BE CH DE DK FR GB LI NL SE

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(54) Method and apparatus for providing demographically targeted television commercials.

(57) Different commercial messages are broadcast to different demographically targeted audiences in a cable television system or the like. A first television channel contains television programs and periodic commercial messages. A second television channel contains alternate commercial messages. Demographic characteristics of a viewer are identified, and commercial messages are selectively provided from the first or second channel, depending upon the viewer's demographic characteristics. Demographic data can be input by a viewer via a remote control,

downloaded to a subscriber's converter from a remote headend, or programmed into the converter at installation. Prioritization of the demographic characteristics of a plurality of television viewers watching a program together enables commercials to be targeted to the viewer having highest priority. Statistical data can be maintained concerning the number and identity of subscribers viewing specific commercials.

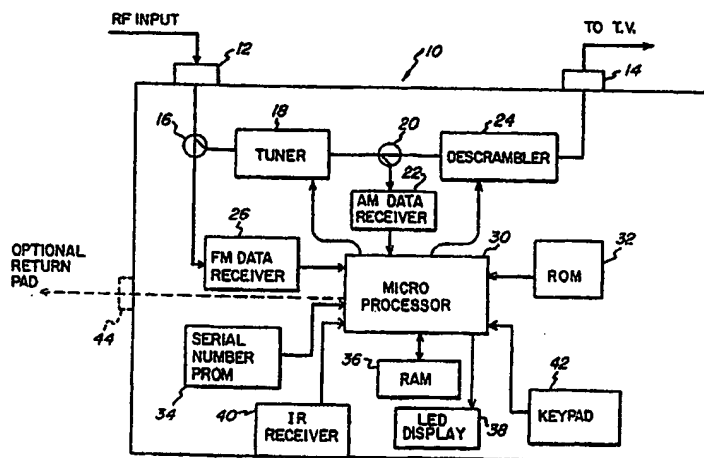


FIG. 1

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